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## Report of the International Peace Bureau for 1904, on the Events Relating to War and Peace.

(Presented to the Thirteenth International Peace Congress.)

The outbreak since January last of the war between Japan and Russia for commercial, military and political preponderance in the Far East, — an event which had been brewing for several years, — has furnished a semblance of an argument to those who pretend that there will always be to the very end of time some part of the globe where men will kill one another. We say a semblance of an argument, because the Russo-Japanese war has taken place in a region remote from the centre of influence of the peace propaganda. The principles of peace, though they have made progress, have not yet been accepted everywhere. The time will come when the Russians and the Japanese will renounce the attempt to secure their political purposes by violence, as other nations have already done. In the meantime, the outbreak of wars in countries which are yet in the morning of civilization does not prove, and never will prove, anything against the grand principle of the definite solidarity of peoples.

The friends of peace have, since the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war, made numerous and earnest efforts to try to induce both the Russian and Japanese governments to have recourse to a friendly solution of the conflict, and to induce the other powers signatory of the Hague Convention to try to secure the settlement of the difficulty between the belligerents by arbitration or mediation. They have done their duty, and will find no occasion to reproach themselves when the responsibilities for the war have been finally determined by public opinion.

Without entering into the details of these efforts, we may here cite the concluding sentences of the "Memorial upon the Russo-Japanese Conflict," which the Permanent International Peace Bureau sent out in December, 1903, to all Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and which it had published in its organ, "La Correspondance Bi-Mensuelle":

... "It seems to us that at the present stage of the negotiations it is not impossible to find some middle ground between the extreme pretensions of the two powers. Furthermore, a war between Russia and Japan on the shores of the Yellow Sea will, like most wars, settle nothing, but will serve only to prepare the way for others. It will necessarily result in the weakening of the two belligerents, and making them less capable of fulfilling their role in the civilization of the Far East. An arrangement, on the other hand, based on mutual concessions recommended by the great powers, would leave both of them a sufficiently large sphere in those vast regions scarcely yet open to the commerce of the world."

"In conclusion, we call the attention of the powers to the urgent necessity of a joint effort on their part with the Russian and the Japanese governments, in harmony with Sect. 2 of the Hague Convention of the 29th of July, 1899, which is as follows:

"In case of grave disagreement or conflict, before appealing to arms, the signatory powers agree to have recourse, as far as circumstances will permit, to the good offices or the mediation of one or more friendly powers!'"

Since the opening of hostilities we have several times renewed our effort to bring about conciliation; and especially after the meeting of the Commission of the

Bureau in April last we addressed to all the governments a pressing invitation to offer mediation.

Up to the present moment the governments not involved in the conflict have limited their efforts to the localization of the war and to the strict maintenance of collective neutrality. But the moment is perhaps not far off when they will be able in a collective way to induce the belligerents to listen to the voice of reason, of justice and humanity, by insisting upon the fact that the present war will be all the more fruitless because neither of the belligerent parties, on account of the pacific ideas now prevailing, can expect effective support toward the realization of its ambitious purposes.

One of the greatest blessings of the recent Anglo-French agreement has been that at the present time it has greatly strengthened and developed these pacific ideas.

It is possible, of course, that in the aberration of their judgment, which has been led away by vain hopes, the Russians and Japanese will remain deaf to this appeal. Would the powers, if an offer of mediation by them should be rejected, find themselves necessitated thereby to have recourse to the use of military force to impose peace? Such is not our opinion. For, before having recourse to such extreme measures, the powers would still have at their disposal other means of coercion. The most efficacious of these might possibly be that of rigorously closing their exchequer to the further appeals of Russia and Japan for new war loans. It is well known that the treasuries of the two belligerents are exhausted at the end of every month, that their war expenses reach enormous figures, and that left to their own financial resources they would be absolutely incapable of continuing the struggle under present conditions.

Under these circumstances Russia and Japan are at the mercy of those who make loans to them, and they could not keep up the campaign for two months if they were not sustained by the hope that their foreign creditors would make still further advances to them in order to save what they have already loaned. Up to a certain point this hope corresponds to the facts in the case, and the expectations of the borrowers have up to the present moment been verified. But everything here below has an end, especially in financial matters; and we should not be surprised if the Western Europeans and the Americans should finally say, on reckoning up the chances of reimbursement for the new as well as the old loans, "So far and no farther." Whenever they say this seriously, they will render the continuation of the present war impossible.

They might also, without waiting for this moment to arrive, take advantage of the first decided success secured by one of the belligerents to induce the conqueror to make offers of peace which his adversary might accept.

These reflections bring us to the consideration of another deplorable situation, perpetuated likewise by the too great facility with which certain governments have accumulated debts upon debts by offering large rates of interest to Western speculators. We have reference to the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, and especially to the sufferings to which the Christian populations of Macedonia and Armenia have been exposed. These questions we have treated in a recent Memorial, which concludes as follows:

(a) For Macedonia, by urging the competent authori-

ties to bring about a conference of representatives of the powers signatory of the Treaty of Berlin of the 13th of July, 1878, Turkey included, with a view of hearing the report of the governments of Russia and Austro-Hungary on the results of their recent diplomatic intervention at Constantinople, and of securing a solution of the controversy by arbitration, if they should conclude that it is time to put an end to the dilatory responses of the Turkish government, which constantly put in peril the peace of the nations.

(b) For Armenia, by demanding serious guarantees for the execution of the promise made to the Armenians in Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin, which is as follows:

"The Sublime Porte undertakes to realize without further delay the ameliorations and reforms which are demanded by local necessities in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and the Kurds. It will periodically give information in regard to the measures adopted for this purpose to the Powers, which shall see that they are carried out."

In contrast to the gloomy pictures which the past year gives us, from the point of view of the peace movement, we are happy to be able to put down to the credit of the year a number of encouraging facts. In no former period has so much been accomplished to bring the peoples and the governments of the world under the sway of international arbitration. As particularly important we may point out the following conventions in their chronological order:

- The Franco-English arbitration treaty of October, 1903.
- The treaty of arbitration between France and Italy, of December, 1903.
- The Anglo-Italian arbitration treaty of January, 1904.
- The arbitration treaty between Denmark and Holland, February, 1904.
- The Franco-Spanish arbitration treaty, March, 1904.
- The Anglo-Spanish arbitration treaty, March, 1904.
- The new Franco-English agreement concerning Egypt, Morocco, Newfoundland and Western Africa, as well as Siam, the New Hebrides and Madagascar, April, 1904.
- The arbitration treaty between France and Holland, April, 1904.
- The Anglo-German arbitration treaty, July, 1904.
- The Anglo-Scandinavian arbitration treaty, July, 1904.
- The arbitration treaty between Spain and Portugal.

To the Franco-Italian arbitration treaty has been added the Franco-Italian convention concerning labor legislation, signed in April, 1904. Finally, the Hague Arbitration Court, after having rendered its award in the Venezuelan affair, is, at the present time, deliberating upon the controversy concerning the taxing of improvements on leased lands in Japan (the Japanese House tax). The Court is also to be entrusted with deciding between the Netherlands and France in the case of any differences which may arise between those two

countries in reference to the submarine cable which connects Saigon with the west coast of Borneo.

Among the questions which were pending, the most important, namely, that of the Alaska Boundary, has been settled during the course of the year. The question of Barotze Land between England and Portugal has been submitted to the arbitration of the King of Italy. Ecuador and Peru, as well as Peru and Colombia, have chosen the King of Spain as arbitrator in their boundary disputes. The controversy between Italy and Peru relative to the interpretation of Article 18 of the treaty of friendship and commerce of 1874 has been settled by the arbitration of Mr. Winkler, a member of the Swiss Federal Tribunal.

We cannot better close this report than by recalling the following words (in substance) uttered by Mr. Roosevelt on the occasion of his Message to the Congress of the United States: "We have not yet arrived at the point where we can avoid all wars by the aid of arbitration, but with prudence, firmness and wisdom the provocations and pretexts of war may be removed and conflicts adjusted by rational methods."

For the Commission of the International Peace Bureau,  
ELIE DUCOMMUN.

BERNE, SWITZERLAND, August 26, 1904.

## Resolutions Adopted by the Thirteenth Universal Peace Congress.

### THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

1. *Resolved*, That the Congress address to the emperors of Russia and Japan an earnest appeal, entreating them, either by direct negotiation or by having recourse to the friendly offices of some neutral power or powers, to put an end to the awful slaughter of their subjects now going on, and urging the plea that, since terms of peace must sooner or later be discussed and settled, it is far better that this shall be done promptly, so as to avert the further sacrifice of precious lives and valuable property.

2. *Resolved*, That the Congress forward an address to each of the powers signatory to the Hague Convention, other than Russia and Japan, reminding them of the provisions of Article 27 of the Convention, and urging them, in accordance therewith, to press upon the governments of Russia and Japan the importance of putting an end, without further delay, to a war which afflicts humanity, hinders legitimate commerce and impedes the progress of the world in the pathway of civilization and peace.

### REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS.

3. The Congress gratefully thanks the President of the United States for his promise to take the first steps toward the convocation of a new International Peace Conference to resume the deliberations commenced at The Hague in 1899. It expresses the opinion that one of the chief duties of such a Conference should be to elaborate and apply a definite plan for the arrest and the subsequent simultaneous and proportionate reduction of the military and naval armaments which the Hague Conference declared to be "a crushing burden and constant peril for the whole world."